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WINTER PLAY SUITS FOR LITTLE TOTS.

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A radio talk by Clarice L. Scott, Bureau of Home Economics, delivered through WRC and 39 other radio stations associated with the National Broadcasting Company, January 22, 1931.

There's a great deal being said, these days, about children's play. Specialists tell us that play goes hand-in-hand with health and happiness and that as much time as possible should be spent out-of-doors, especially in the sunshine. But snow or rain need not interfere if suitable wraps are worn. And what makes a wrap suitable, you may ask. It needs to be comfortably warm, but never burdensome or heavy; materials should be appropriate for the climate; and the designs should allow absolute freedom for all kinds of play. We have been doing a great deal of thinking, designing, and experimenting with playsuits at the Bureau of Home Economics and if television were only perfected, I'd show you the results. A play suit has been designed for the youngster who lives where it is very cold and snowy, as well as for the one who enjoys a warmer climate.

We have made an aviator suit, in keeping with this air-minded age, from a firm, durable cotton that is both windproof and showerproof. It can even be laundered without spoiling its waterproof qualities. This garment is in one piece, as are all of the play suits designed in the Bureau. A long slide fastener reaches from the crotch to the neckline and can be closed quickly and securely. There is no chance of this fastener catching the underneath garment because a double fold of oilcloth protects it.

Wide legs are gathered into ankle bands that go on the outside of gashoes and fasten loosely with shiny nickel buttons and loops of firm round elastic. Plackets are made weatherproof by triangle shaped godets that fold back out of sight as the bands are fastened. Every detail of the suit defies chilly or inclement weather. It's a happy child who owns a suit like this and doesn't have to rush inside at the first sign of rain.

From this same showerproof material a suit was made for very cold weather but it is to be worn over an inside suit of wool jersey. These two suits of such different fabrics with a layer of air between are far warmer than a single suit of heavy cloth. Besides, there is the advantage that this outfit is as changeable as the temperature. The light weight, soft, wool jersey suit is just enough for a cool Fall or Spring day when the air is still. The waterproof suit is excellent not only in rainy, but also in windy weather, and together they are ideal for a cold winter day. This two layer outfit is planned so that sharp winds and snow are completely outwitted, and the youngster who lives where zero weather prevails can enjoy his outdoor play just as much as his little friend who lives in a warmer climate.

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A suit of cotton suede was made for the child who lives where winters are moderate. It is extremely simple in design with wide legs and sleeves held in closely at the ankles and wrists by knit bands that keep out the cold winds. These bands may be knitted by hand if you like, but they are even better and less expensive if made from lumber jack bands. Alterations for the second year are surprisingly simple, for this suit, as well as the others, was designed with this in mind. The style is not quickly outgrown since it is one which must fit loosely to look well. And, even if it does need to be altered, it is no task to lengthen or replace the knitted bands and to insert a sham belt thru the body of the outfit.

Before you buy new materials for a play suit, take an inventory of discarded coats about the house. They are an excellent source of good materials that cannot always be bought over the yard goods counter. The worn places of the coat can be skipped and you will be surprised to see what a lovely outfit can be made. Old sweaters whose elbows are past help may be used for the knitted bands if the colors harmonize. Sometimes a package of dye will transform the material into a more useful color. However, avoid very dark colors. Children get so much more enjoyment from bright play suits. They are also more protective. An outfit in red, blue or green is easier for the motorist to see than one in drab gray or brown which is too much like the color of fences and fields in winter.

If you wish to know more about cold weather play suits for little children, let us send you leaflet 54, "Winter Play Suits." It will give you a number of other pointers on the selection of material, and on making these suits. We will also be glad to send you a list of commercial patterns which have been made for children's outfits designed at the bureau.
